

REMARKS

I. Status of the Application

Claims 14, 16-17 and 23-24 are all the claims pending in the Application, with claims 14 and 16 being in independent form. Claims 14, 16 and 17 have been rejected.

II. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner has rejected claims 14, 16 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0149704 to Kano et al. (hereinafter “Kano”). Applicant respectfully traverses all of these rejections for *at least* the reasons set forth below.

According to the MPEP, “a claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference” (MPEP § 2131). Applicant respectfully submits that claims 14, 16 and 17 positively recite limitations which are not disclosed (or suggested) by Kano.

A. Independent Claim 14

For example, claim 14 recites (among other things):

...wherein the control device... judges whether
to output a signal of the information
reproduction equipment to the other information
reproduction equipment...

As explained in the present specification regarding an exemplary embodiment of the present invention, a signal from information reproduction equipment (e.g., from VCR 7) is inputted to the information processing equipment and is then outputted to the other information reproduction equipment (e.g., Plasma Display Panel 3) (*see e.g.*, page 8, lines 19-25; FIGS. 1 and 3).

Kano fails to disclose or suggest the above features of claim 14. The grounds of rejection allege that the control device 318 shown in FIG. 1 of Kano judges whether to output a signal of the VCR (i.e., the alleged information reproduction equipment) to the TV (i.e., the alleged other information reproduction equipment). Applicant respectfully disagrees with the grounds of rejection.

Kano discloses an input switching circuit 316, which selects one of the audio signal input terminals 311-315 (e.g., CD 311, GAME 312, TV 313, and VCR 314) and inputs an audio signal. The input switching circuit 316 then outputs a signal to surround circuit 320, Graphic Equalizer 322, Electronic Volume 324, Power Amp 326 and, finally, to speaker terminal 328. However, contrary to the allegations in the grounds of rejection, as disclosed in Kano, the inputted signal to the input switching circuit 316 (e.g., from VCR 314) is not outputted to TV 313. Therefore, Kano fails to disclose or suggest the features of wherein the control device judges whether to output a signal of the information reproduction equipment to the other information reproduction equipment, as claimed. Therefore, claim 14 is not anticipated by Kano for *at least* these reasons.

Additionally, without conceding to the merits of the Examiner's rejections, Applicant has amended claim 14, as set forth above, to recite (among other things):

...wherein the information processing
equipment comprises:

a detection device which detects a
presence of the information reproduction
equipment connected to the information processing
equipment; and

a detection result output device which
outputs a detection result of the detection
device to the control unit.

Kano nowhere discloses or suggests these features. Indeed, Kano fails to mention that the AV amplifier unit 310 comprises any sort of detection device and detection result output device, as claimed. Accordingly, claim 14 is not anticipated by Kano for *at least* these additional reasons.

B. Independent Claim 16

In view of the similarity between the requirements of claim 16 and the requirements discussed above with respect to independent claim 14, Applicant respectfully submits that arguments analogous to the foregoing arguments as to the patentability of independent claim 14 demonstrate the patentability of claim 16. As such, it is respectfully submitted that claim 16 is patentably distinguishable over the cited Kano reference *at least* for reasons analogous to those presented above. Further, Applicant submits that the dependent claim 17 is allowable *at least* by virtue of its dependency on claim 16. Thus, the allowance of these claims is respectfully solicited of the Examiner.

III. New Claims

Applicant hereby adds new claims 23 and 24. Applicant submits that claims 23-24 are patentable *at least* by virtue of their dependency and by virtue of the recitations set forth therein.

For example, claim 23 recites the features of wherein signals inputted to the information processing equipment include image signals. These features are fully supported by *at least* FIG. 3 of the original specification, which discloses (among other things) an On Screen Display 21 in Control Box 2. In contrast to the recitations of claim 23, Kano discloses that the signals input to the input switching circuit 316 are audio signals input via audio signal input terminals 311-315. As such, Kano does not teach or suggest the features of wherein signals inputted to the

information processing equipment include image signals, as claimed. Accordingly, claim 23 is patentable for *at least* these reasons.

Moreover, claim 24 recites the features of wherein the connector is an input/output connector. Contrary to the recitations of claim 24, the audio signal input terminals 311-315 disclosed in Kano are nothing more than input terminals. Kano provides no disclosure or suggestion whatsoever that the audio signal input terminals 311-315 are input/output connectors as claimed. Therefore, claim 24 is patentable for *at least* these reasons.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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